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MASTER WORKERS.

IV. DR. MILNE BRAMWELL AND HYPNOTISM.

BY HAROLD BEGBIE.

"Now the soul is the mind of the mind. It can build and construct, and look beyond and penetrate space, and create. It is the keenest, the sharpest tool possessed by man. But what would be said if a carpenter about to commence a piece of work examined his tools and deliberately cast away that with the finest edge? Such is the conduct of those who reject the inner mind or psyche altogether."—RICHARD JEFFERIES.

FOR a considerable time now Dr. Milne Bramwell has been recognised as an authority on hypnotism both in England and in Europe. His experiments, his discoveries, and his published works on the subject have attracted attention in medical quarters, and have secured for hypnotism that respect which only ignorance or prejudice could deny. It is my purpose in the following brief pages to consider the purely psychological aspect of Dr. Bramwell's work—that aspect of it which justifies his inclusion among the master workers of the world—rather than to venture the intricate and less interesting task of describing hypnotism as a therapeutic agent.

All the men of science I have talked to on the matter of occult phenomena seem to hold that no step can be taken to investigate those mysteries until the secondary consciousness of man has been explored and its operations explained. But not only occult phenomena; the riddle of life must surely defy solution while we attempt to solve it before considering the composition and the workings of the human mind. It was after reading Dr. Bramwell's article, "Hypnotic and Post-Hypnotic Appreciation of Time; Secondary and Multiplex Personalities," that I realised the full importance of hypnotism as a tool in the workshop of psychology.

For hypnotism is a means of investigating the second greatest mystery of mortality, Consciousness. What is a man's consciousness? It is his knowledge of an infinitesimal part of the action of his brain, his mind, himself. By this consciousness he is aware of certain things in himself, can recall certain events of his past, can settle through the agency of his brain certain problems that present themselves to him for solution. But there is a far greater area of his cerebral activities of which he knows nothing.* Consciousness is not powerful enough to cover the whole of his brain. It may utilise the products of this greater activity, but it is done unconsciously; and, on the other hand, what is far more disquieting to contemplate, this active consciousness is very largely controlled and directed by the action of the secondary consciousness—a thing conscious in itself, but whose influence is not recognised by the normal consciousness. On every man that has ever walked in this little world, the secondary consciousness, of which he knows nothing, has imposed its will, has affected his character, and has shaped his destiny. The effects of environment and heredity must surely be as smoking flax in comparison with the terrific influence upon a man's conscious mind of this remote and neglected hidden self, which thinks, works and remembers behind the normal consciousness.

People are slow to accept the idea of a dual personality; but hypnotism, it seems to me, forces it upon them—by actual demonstration. It is not a question of a working hypothesis, a plausible theory, or anything else of that thin nature: it is a thing provable and demonstrable. Let me mention one of the simplest facts in everyday life, before I proceed to Dr. Bramwell's researches. Nearly everybody has tried the experiment of falling to sleep with the *idée fixe* that they must awake at a certain hour—an hour unusual to them. One falls asleep, meaning to rise at seven in the morning. At seven, or thereabouts, one wakes. Who called you? Who tapped upon the door of your slumbering consciousness and said "Wake!" bade you shake off unconsciousness and don your consciousness? Who

* See the article on Psychical Research in the February number of the PALL MALL MAGAZINE.

(attached) See p 266

was it? It was you. You called yourself; you called you. And the one you was unconscious of the other you.

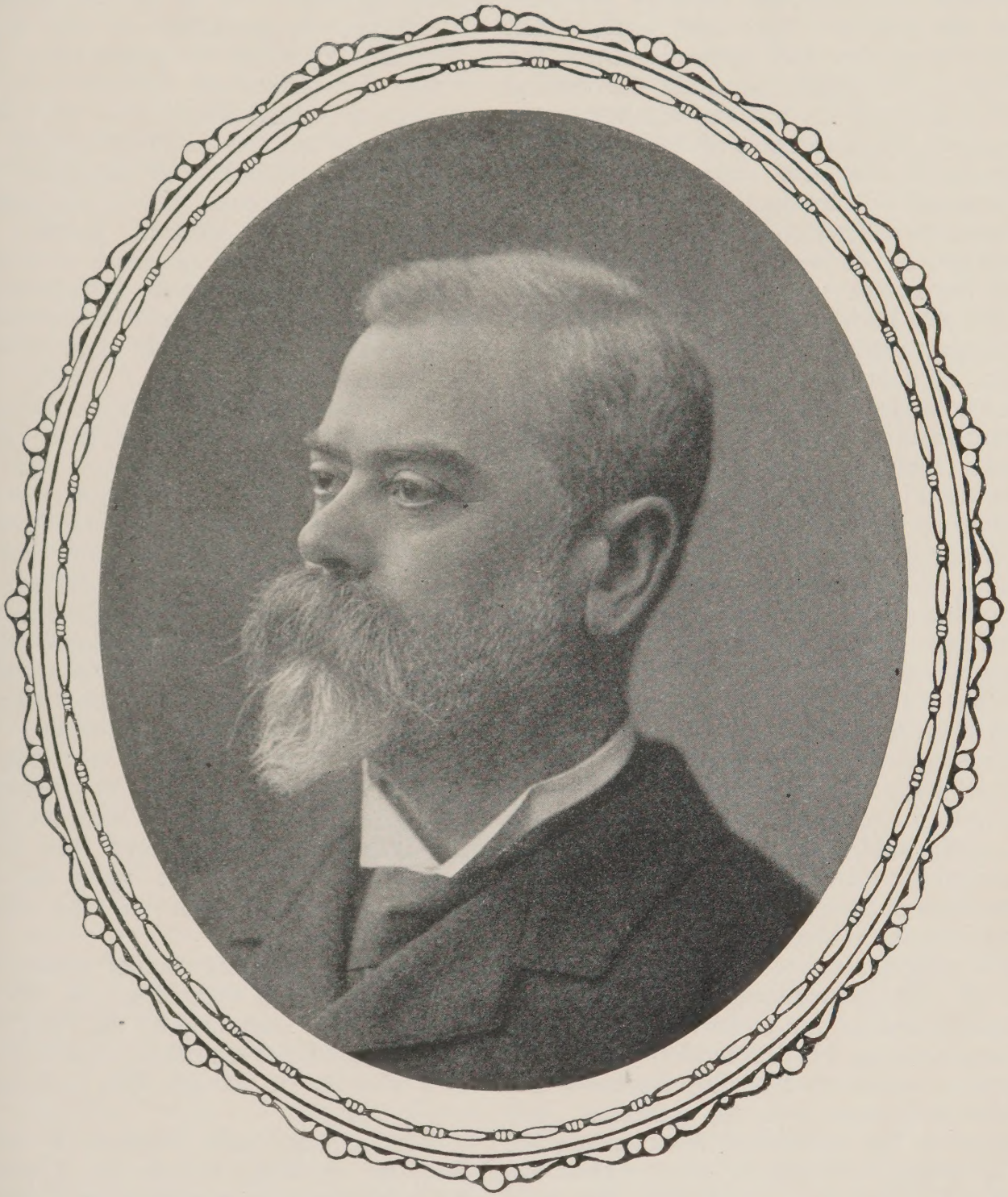
But here is a far more striking instance. After having hypnotised her on several occasions, Dr. Bramwell once talked to a subject *during hypnosis* of her mental experiences in former states of hypnosis. "When you do not speak to me," she said, "and nothing occurs that interests me directly, I generally think of nothing and pass into a condition of profound restfulness. Once, however, I had an important dress to make, and was puzzled how to do it. After you had hypnotised me and left me resting quietly, I planned the dress. When I awoke, I did not know I had done so, and was still troubled about it. On my way home I suddenly thought how the dress ought to be made, and afterwards successfully carried out my ideas. I believed I had found the way out of the difficulty there and then in the waking state: I now know I did so previously when hypnotised."

"I now know." Consider those words. In this state of hypnosis the subject recalled certain activities of her mind in a former state of trance. The memory operated, was intelligent, and could even speak of the conscious mind, which, as she said—criticising it almost as a separate entity—did not know that the difficulty of the dress had been solved in trance. But mark what follows. "When she was aroused from hypnosis," Dr. Bramwell told me, "she had no more recollection of what she had just said to me than the man in the moon: she still believed she had fashioned the problematical dress in a state of ordinary consciousness!" This is a case, simple enough in its details, which Dr. Bramwell regards with profoundest interest. He sees its indication, and is investigating towards it. I do not think anything could more clearly show the operations of a mind, separate and distinct from the normal mind, than this simple story. The normal consciousness and the subliminal consciousness had each its separate conversation—and each its separate memory.

In a state of hypnosis, too, people will work out sums quite beyond their waking powers. For instance, an illiterate servant-girl will be asked how many hours are contained in 3853 seconds, and in a moment she will give the answer, sometimes almost correctly, sometimes quite correctly. Dr. Bramwell will tell a person under his observations, while in a state of hypnosis, that he shall perform some act or other at the expiration of, for example, 20,845 minutes after waking; and when the time comes, the subject, not knowing why he does so, will execute the command he has received during trance.* An interesting experiment, frequently made by Dr. Bramwell, is even more complex than these arithmetical calculations. He will tell a subject in his waking consciousness to write down a few verses, and so soon as they are written Dr. Bramwell, without looking at them, will take them into his keeping. He then bids the subject read aloud from some book quite unknown to him, and while his attention is thus engaged, hypnotises the man suddenly. At that moment he places pencil and paper near his right hand, and suggests to him: "On waking you will go on reading where you left off, and at the same time write down how often *b* (or any other letter selected) occurs in the verses you gave me." At that, he says "Wake up!"—and, coming to what we should call "himself," the subject resumes his reading at the very point where it was broken into, and at the same time writes down the answer to the problem suggested. "This, almost invariably correct," says Dr. Bramwell, "is often done so rapidly that I have not had time to count the letters, even with the verses before me. I then tell the subject to stop reading, and ask him what he has written. He replies, 'Nothing,' and, when I show him the paper, is astonished, declaring he doesn't know what it means. I then re-hypnotise him, whereupon the lost memory returns, and he not only recalls the suggestion but also the fact that he has carried it out."

It will be seen from this (and had I the space I could quote a hundred

* It is essential to notice, because of the sensational nonsense talked about hypnotism, that no one will perform a suggestion received in hypnosis that is repugnant to his normal consciousness. A murderer told to murder somebody might probably do so, but a man from whom the homicidal influence was absent would reject the idea instantly. He would become aware of the idea when he met the person he had been told to kill, but he would easily thrust it aside, and laugh at it as though it were a nightmare.



Dr. J. Milne Bramwell.

Photo by C. Vandyk.

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convincing illustrations of the contention) that in hypnosis the mind is able to act intelligently and rationally; that the processes of deliberate reckoning and reflection are rather strengthened than diminished; that the memory performs its office without let; and, further, that the consciousness of hypnosis covers the normal consciousness, while the normal consciousness has not the smallest grasp upon the consciousness of hypnosis. Dr. Bramwell will not commit himself to anything, but he inclines to think that further investigation of this secondary self will prove it to be the pregnant parent of all the occult phenomena in the world. Like Mr. Podmore, he rejects the mystical interpretations of spiritualism, but, unlike Sir William Crookes, he rejects the theory of telepathy and brain waves. "I have seen," he said to me the other day, with twinkling eyes, "the most amazing miracles in thought-reading and telepathy: amazing—prodigious! But when I have asked the miracle-workers to sit back to back, and have asked one of them to tell me the name of the card I show to his brilliant partner, strange to say there is no miracle—only a shocking bad guess!"

No, he finds all the mysteries of the world locked up in man's head. There are no ghosts for Dr. Bramwell, no spirits, no clairvoyants, no thought-readers. The secret of occult phenomena for him lies in the subliminal consciousness,—that hidden life which Professor James writes about so charmingly, while Dr. Bramwell touches it, probes it, cross-examines it, one might almost say, dissects it. For when the impediment of the normal consciousness is removed, the larger consciousness of the hidden life comes into view, so that during hypnosis Dr. Bramwell can talk to, question, and examine the subliminal consciousness of his subjects. This is what makes me regard hypnotism as infinitely the most important branch of psychical inquiry. As astronomy came from astrology, and as chemistry came from alchemy, so from mesmerism—thanks to James Braid, and not, as some suppose, to the French—has come the science of hypnotism, the one and only means of observing the action of the secondary consciousness. While you peer through the keyhole into the box of the mind, the hypnotist places his key in the lock, turns it, and opens the lid. He sees what others guess at, he examines what others hypothecate. And what is there in science more likely to shed light upon the mystery of existence than a patient investigation of man's consciousness? Huxley's prophecy that the next great discovery will be in the realm of psychology seems likely—if we except wireless telegraphy—to prove true.

For Dr. Bramwell, at any rate, the secondary consciousness is the most engaging of all the fields of inquiry. It not only promises to illumine the mystery of existence, but it explains so much that has hitherto puzzled the inquirer. Take the question of mental healing, Christian Science, King's touch, and the like. "There is no reason in the world why we should doubt certain cases of healing claimed by these people," said Dr. Bramwell. "Harness's electropathic belts no doubt cured martyrs to rheumatism, even when there was no electricity in them! I myself knew a man who was cured of a nervous disorder by wearing one of these belts; but he relapsed immediately after reading the Harness exposure." In Christian Science, too, I have heard of many people whose ailments have been either minimised or cured while their faith in the metaphysics of the Healers remained unshaken. But so soon as doubt entered the mind, so soon as a wider knowledge of philosophy secured an entry into the consciousness, the ailments returned and they found themselves forced back upon the less romantic ministrations of the family physician.

Dr. Bramwell told me of some such cases in his own experience, all pointing to the power exercised by the mind over certain functional disorders; and I asked him whether he thought that faith could really heal.

"In certain cases, beyond a doubt. But no mental healer or Christian Scientist will cure a compound fracture: no, not if all the noble army of them throughout the world assembled in one room and 'realised' for six months, or six years, that in the spiritual kingdom there are no such things as compound fractures. But, mental diseases, hysterical diseases, —yes, they can cure some of them. And how? In truth, it is merely unscientific hypnotism. They work people up into an artificial and exalted state, by appealing to their religious sense, and when the normal consciousness is more or less in a

state of abeyance they suggest to the patients that in God's spiritual world there is no pain, and as the material world is a delusion of the senses, they—the patients—as denizens of the spiritual world, cannot possibly have any pain. The patient takes that idea home with him, broods upon it, 'holds it,' as they say,—and thus, in response to forcible suggestion, the pain disappears. Pain is a matter of the consciousness, and many hypnotic experiments have shown that suggestion can produce anæsthesia."

"But is it not likely," the reader may inquire, "that a man working through the agency of religion, and using the hypnotist's weapon of *suggestion*, might accomplish more than the materialist man of science?"

Alas! for that hideous spirit which has set a barrier between religion and science—this is a subject which no man of science will discuss in public. (Oh, what a lot the old controversialists have got to answer for!) Let me remark here, however, that to many men a careful study of the miracles of Christ seems to point to the fact that He used natural means to attain His ends; that His power was greatly dependent upon the faith of the individual to whom He made His suggestions; and that in one place He was unable to do any mighty work "because of their unbelief."

It may be that unconsciously science is putting into the hands of Christianity the means of quickening the spiritual sense of mankind, and the means of returning to the original command of its Founder, that it should "heal the sick" as well as "preach the gospel."

Much water must flow under London Bridge, I fear, before the average man realises what hypnotism really is; but in concluding this article with a brief *résumé* of many conversations with Dr. Bramwell on this point, I hope that something may be achieved, at any rate, in disabusing the popular mind of one or two foolish delusions.

Hypnosis is not due to any mysterious force or fluid emanating from the operator. The condition is a subjective one: the operator simply calls into action various powers which are latent in the subject's brain,—in short, he brings the subject's secondary consciousness to the front. For instance, a person is sent to a hypnotist by his physician, suffering from violent dipsomania. (I am not here describing Dr. Bramwell's treatment, of which I know nothing.) The method employed is this. He is shown into a room where the light is subdued and restful. He is seated in a comfortable chair, and told to try and free his mind from distraction. The better to induce this freedom from distraction, he is asked to keep his eyes upon the eyes of the doctor—for one is far less liable to wandering thoughts when the eyes are fixed upon the eyes of another person—and he is then asked if he really does in truth desire to be free from his craving for alcohol. Unless there is desire for amendment (how strangely religious it sounds!) the hypnotist is powerless. Hypnotism tends to increase and not to diminish the force of volition—a most important point for the public to realise. If the hypnotist is assured that the patient desires to escape from his craving, he waits till he sees by the eyes that the mind of his subject is so free from distraction as to be able to receive a suggestion, and then he merely says, "Go to sleep." He suggests, in fact, to his patient that he should go to sleep, and, if the patient does not oppose the suggestion, to sleep he goes. The consciousness withdraws as it withdraws under anæsthetics, and the subliminal consciousness becomes actively existent. At this point treatment begins: the hypnotist suggests that the craving for alcohol is either dangerous, foolish, or a vain imagination—as the case may be—and when the subconsciousness agrees and makes promise to abandon the alcoholic habit, in nine cases out of ten a successful treatment has begun. Coming to himself, that is to say, awaking to his normal and narrower consciousness, the patient finds at every inclination to drink that in himself there is a restraining influence, something that holds him back, warns him, perhaps even tells him that the appetite is gone,—a something not ourselves which makes for righteousness, and yet a something which belongs to nobody but ourselves.

How strangely this subconsciousness acts every man may see for himself in the simple unremembered acts that make up his life. How often, for instance, when we abandon the hunt after a forgotten name, we find that the name suddenly presents itself to our consciousness, as though of its own accord. Or,

how often has one suffered discomfort and annoyance in a theatre, to find when the interest of the play has broken through the narrow consciousness and fastened upon the deeper consciousness, that every discomfort has vanished? Or in reading a book, or in writing an article, the striking of a clock, the clanging of a church bell, or the rattle of a street piano, drives one frantic till the whole consciousness is absorbed, and then they disappear. The bell still bangs, setting up vibrations which strike upon the drum of the ear and sound through the chambers of the brain, but the little consciousness is switched off, and one is completely unaware of the annoyance. It is to stimulate the action of this subconsciousness that the hypnotist works; it is to increase a man's control over himself, to give him greater will-power, greater knowledge of himself, greater efficiency for the activities of life. He does not impose his will upon yours; he cannot force you to act against what we call your conscience; but he can multiply the power of your will, and he can import into the activities you desire to engage in an energy which, while it is all your own, could not be set in motion without his interposition.

If you wanted to impress upon a man some extraordinarily important matter, you would not do so in a room full of merriment, chatter, and distractions; you would take him out of this room, into a chamber where you could be perfectly quiet. Hypnosis is this other chamber. Normal consciousness is the room filled with a thousand distractions.

There are, so far as I can gather, three states of hypnosis: one so deep that the patient awakening remembers nothing of what has passed; another in which on awakening he can remember everything; and a third from which the patient comes not knowing, and actually denying, that he has been hypnotised. It is this third which helps one to understand the nature of hypnotism.

Bernheim's theory that hypnotism is merely suggestion does not find favour with Dr. Bramwell. Owing to the different conditions under which they are made, suggestions, he says, act with greater force in hypnosis than in normal life. Notwithstanding, it may be said, with a certain amount of truth, that we are constantly engaged in hypnotising ourselves. We are always making negative or positive suggestions mentally, and these have an influence, sometimes a far-reaching one, on our lives. The man who goes to his work feeling that he is in the mood for it is suggesting to his secondary consciousness that he will succeed. The cricketer who goes to the wickets feeling that he is in for a big score is suggesting to his secondary consciousness that he will succeed. In every department of life, at every hour of the day, the consciousness is suggesting things to the mind—good things and bad things, strong things and weak things, happy things and sad things. You can hypnotise yourself into a Jekyll or into a Hyde, and you can make yourself feel as vigorous as Sandow or as flaccid and degenerate as the young gentlemen who hang over public-house counters with infinite yearning towards aitchless barmaids. The valetudinarian is his own sour-faced hypnotist. The cheerful optimist is his own vigorous hypnotist. Temperament, character, disposition, and all the rest of it, is very largely the acting of this unknown secondary consciousness. And what is habit but the will of the hidden self?

And this, as the reader will readily see, reveals an enormous problem to the modern world. How many people are locked up in lunatic asylums who might be free of life if the hypnotist were permitted to evoke their hidden selves? How many men and women are eating their hearts out in prisons and penitentiaries who might now be clean and useful citizens if the man of science, instead of the man of law, had sat in judgment upon them? We talk of free-will—that tautological phrase—but how is a man free if there is working in him a great area of the brain of which he knows nothing? Consider it: from the stammerer, whose secondary consciousness tells him that he cannot utter certain words, to the murderer, whose secondary consciousness tells him that he must kill, we are all, every one of us, under the tyrannical dominion of a consciousness not ourselves, and yet a consciousness which is nobody's but our own. This influence has been guessed at down all the ages, and men have called it by various fine-sounding names, from Kismet to Environment; but it is only now, in this soft-footed age, when the hand drops from the wire to touch the ether, from

the roaring furnace to direct the spark, that men have laid hands upon it and added its name to the terminology of science.

But, have they named it aright? Will the investigations of the psychologist, working through hypnotism, tear the last veil from the face of Isis? For whether consciousness is single or dual, whether self is one or two, it is Consciousness, it is Personality, which is the mystery of existence. It is said that the desire for immortality is dying, that men no longer care whether they continue or cease with the collapse of physical energy, that the modern problem of the Church is not to stimulate men's moral instincts but to quicken their desire for a life after death. And yet every fresh discovery in medical science seems to convince us that consciousness is not a note in the physical instrument, our body, but rather the player at the keyboard who controls the intermezzo of Birth and Death. Consciousness can be cut off from the nerve centres, and only the other day a leading alienist in London told me that he has frequently examined moral imbeciles to find that their brains were as healthy, as large, and as well nourished as the sane. And what is the successful treatment of the insane, but so to develop, educate and stimulate the consciousness (not by hypnotism, but by healthy and absorbing employment), that it may exercise control over the action of the brain? So that, it would almost seem, the spirituality of consciousness is to be forced upon men in an age of religious indifferentism, by the medical man and the psychologist. And this is what gives to Dr. Bramwell's work, in my eyes, its supreme importance. Physician and psychologist may claim that these discoveries belong to them, but one can hardly reflect upon the narrative of Christianity without seeing how closely the methods, at any rate, of the scientific hypnotist coincide with the methods of the great Healer. One must desire the benefit one seeks; the greater the faith the greater the result; and one educates the consciousness to obtain control over the brain—either for good or evil—by constant and quiet meditation. These are likenesses on the surface; I think that there are others deeper down which science will one day find herself forced to reveal.

"Many turn aside," says Richard Jefferies, "the instant the soul is mentioned, and I sympathise with them in one sense: they fear lest, if they acknowledge it, they will be fettered by mediæval conditions. My contention is that the restrictions of the mediæval era should entirely be cast into oblivion, but the soul recognised and employed. Instead of slurring over the soul I desire to see it at its highest perfection. . . . The mind has its logic and exercise of geometry, and thus assisted brings a great force to the solution of problems. The soul remains untaught, and can effect little."

The reproach is to Science and Religion.

"MR. PUNCH."

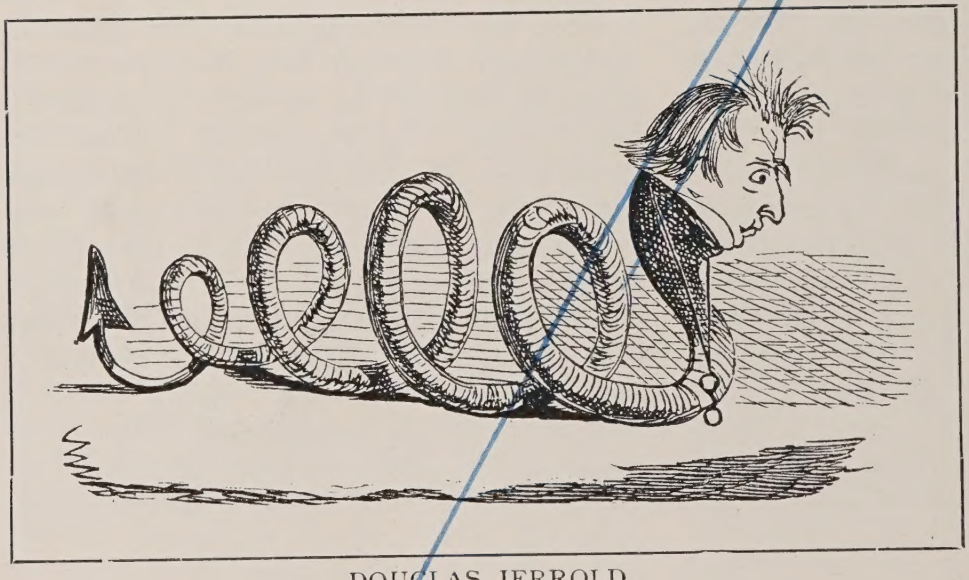
HIS PREDECESSORS AND CONTEMPORARIES.

BY

SIR F. C. BURNAND.

III.

I CANNOT hit on the exact date of Alfred Bunn's *A Word with Punch*. Mr. Spielmann, in his excellent and most carefully compiled book concerning the history of *Punch*, does not provide us with the date of this brochure, which, as he informs me on my referring to him, is 1848. The only persons signalled out for attack by Bunn (who was assisted mainly by George Augustus Sala) were Mark Lemon, Douglas Jerrold, and Gilbert Abbott à Beckett: their portraits are given in these caricatures, vignette-size. Bunn is represented *en silhouette*, replying by rule of five fingers and thumb (thus "showing his hand") to Mr. Gilbert Abbott à Beckett's courteous request for a private box, in order that he, in his capacity as critic, might be present at the *première* of the opera entitled *Don Quixote*. (By the way, what has become of *Don Quixote*? Whose was it? Who sang in it?)



DOUGLAS JERROLD.

From *A Word with Punch*.

The other members of the literary staff of *Punch* are represented on the frontispiece of *A Word with Punch*: they are Thackeray, Tom Taylor, and Horace Mayhew, to none of whom is any allusion made in the letterpress. As the *Punch* artists are conspicuous by their absence, it may be supposed that either Bunn had no grudge against any of them personally or professionally, or that George Augustus Sala, who was certainly responsible for the illustrations, was rather chary of attacking artists who knew far better even than he did how to "draw and defend themselves."

That the *Word with Punch* had the approval of *The Man in the Moon* is evident from the fact that at the head of the frontispiece of *A Word with Punch* is a little figure which is a reproduction in miniature of the illustration on the cover of *The Man in the Moon*. So perhaps besides Sala some of Albert Smith's collaborateurs, including at that time Shirley Brooks, may have joined forces with Bunn and Sala in the literary department of this memorable retort uncourteous, to which very wisely *Punch* did not reply. Bunn's brochure was "a nine days' wonder," and on the tenth was completely forgotten, except by a few who, in some way or other, were professionally interested in preserving its memory. Some of its mock advertisements are very amusing. No one has ever so completely succeeded in this peculiar vein of humour (only without rancour or any personality, simply *pour rire*) as the late Gilbert à Beckett, eldest son of Gilbert Abbott à Beckett, who was attacked by Bunn and talented assistants.

In 1851 Albert Smith must have been on good terms once again with the *Punch* people, as, in conjunction with John Leech for sole illustrator, he brought out *The Month* (of a size similar to *The Man in the Moon*, of which he had resigned the editorship), which was printed by Messrs. Bradbury and Evans. In *The Month* there is no sort of attack, open or covert, on *Punch*; but on the contrary there is a complimentary allusion to "*Punch's* immortal joke," one of his many immortal